

26 JUL 1978

Honorable Birch Bayh, Chairman
Select Committee on Intelligence
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Our review of the study entitled "The Quality and Utility of U.S. Intelligence Concerning China" prepared by the Subcommittee on Collection, Production and Quality has been completed.

There was general agreement within the Intelligence Community that the study was well-prepared and accurately reflects the successes, trends, and shortcomings in the collection and analysis of intelligence on China. Separate comments from all appropriate elements of the Community were requested; no attempt was made to synthesize all the comments since to do so might dilute the impact of the individual papers. Moreover, several elements of the Intelligence Community have put forward subjects for strengthening the study prior to its final publication. All of these comments are available at CIA for your staff's review. They may wish to read these papers before the study is placed in final form.

Let me briefly summarize these comments. The Intelligence and Research Bureau of the State Department reported that the Department generally agreed with the thrust of the paper and had no specific comments. The Defense Department had no argument with the report's observations and felt that it was well written. The Defense Intelligence Agency suggested specific revisions in various parts of the text rather than submitting a separate evaluation. NSA agreed with the report as a whole and made separate comments on each paragraph.

CIA's concerned offices found no problem with the overall concepts and conclusions of the study. The Office of Regional and Political Analysis, however, suggested that the paper did not do justice to the policy support rendered by CIA to senior

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policymakers. The Office of Strategic Research regretted the decision not to discuss the military attache system and its collection. The Director of Geographic and Cartographic Research and the offices concerned with technical collection and imagery analysis were quite specific in their replies.


Most of the offices recommended against a public version of the study. My main concern is that intelligence sources and methods may be endangered unless the text is so severely edited that it will be of little public interest. We could explore the possibility, however, of preparing a text at a lower classification which could receive wider dissemination for interested parties throughout the Government.

The recommendations, to my mind, are useful and will be incorporated into our planning. Let me comment more specifically on several of these:


We agree that DIA's capabilities should continue to be improved wherever this can be accomplished given the limitations of time and funding.



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We concur that the analysis function in  can be strengthened, and we will be willing to do more in this field as this is feasible.

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The problem of granting more time and effort to imagery collection on non-military intelligence targets is a complicated issue. We are sensitive to the needs of the non-military customer, 

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Imagery studies can only meet a part of this requirement.

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We quite agree that debriefings of senior policymakers by intelligence analysts and operations officers do help greatly in the collection processes. Such policymakers, however, are very busy and do already contribute valuable time to intelligence debriefings. I can only hope to encourage them to be as forthcoming as possible in the future.

The problem of displacement of collectors and analysts throughout the Intelligence Community is not new. I certainly agree that the more that can be done to bring them together, the better the product will be, but this problem is not unique to Chinese collection. The integration of the Intelligence Community under the current Executive Order and the formation of the National Tasking Center has been an attempt, in part, to meet this need. I will do everything possible to achieve better coordination of and mutually useful contributions from all elements involved in intelligence collection on China.

You suggested that we report to the Committee by next February on the measures we have taken to respond to the recommendations in this report. In my opinion, Mr. Chairman, seven months is too short a period to demonstrate progress in implementing recommendations as broadly based as those in the study. I will report to the Committee at any time, but may I suggest that a report after a full year would be more useful. It could take as its base your study and the Community's specific responses. If you agree, I will ask my National Intelligence Officer for China to meet with the appropriate member of your staff to establish an outline for this report.

Yours sincerely,

/s/ Stansfield Turner

STANSFIELD TURNER

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